

Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Consumer Advisory: Tips on Spotting Summer Travel Scams

(Phoenix, Ariz. – July 12, 2007) Summer may already be half over, but there is still time to take that well-earned vacation. Attorney General Terry Goddard encourages consumers to make travel plans carefully and be aware of potential travel scams.

The Attorney General's Office has received information from Arizona travelers reaching their destination, only to find that the lodging arrangements they made were not legitimate. Travelers often lose their advance payments and have no place to stay.

Goddard offers the following advice to consumers:

- When booking over the Internet, be leery of making reservations with unknown people or businesses that require advance payment or deposits without a written contract. Legitimate businesses will always provide a written contract guaranteeing your reservation.
- Don't make any transactions that can be completed only by phone. Legitimate reservation companies will offer the option to book by phone or via the Internet. Ask questions about their address, a written contract and refund policy. Do an Internet search of the address to see if a map shows the location.
- Be cautious of travel offers that appear "too good to be true." Dramatically reduced fares are often not legitimate and may require additional payments that the buyer is unaware of when making the reservation. Read the fine print before purchasing.
- Beware of travel reservation Web sites that are unfamiliar to you. Scam Web sites have been cropping up that offer reduced fares on travel and hotel accommodations only to steal your credit card information. Research a site before making a purchase and stick to trusted travel sites when booking online.
- Avoid nearly-free, all-inclusive vacation packages. Often the amenities and perks are not as they appear; there are additional hidden charges and buyers are forced to sit through lengthy, high pressure time-share presentations.

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud, please contact the Attorney General's Office in Phoenix at 602.542.5763; in Tucson at 520.628.6504; or at 1.800.352.8431 outside the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas. To file a complaint in person, the Attorney General's Office has 35 satellite offices throughout Arizona with volunteers available to help. Locations and hours are posted on the Attorney General's Web site at www.azag.gov.

Please visit the Attorney General's Web site to sign up for scam alerts and weekly messages from Attorney General Goddard.

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